

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject patent application are respectfully requested.

Applicant has amended claim 9 as kindly suggested by the Examiner and thus this claim and its dependent claims 11, 13 and 15 are now believed to be allowable.

Applicants have also made amendments of a formal nature to claims 19, 20 and 31.

While not acquiescing in the rejections based on Itoh et al., claims 10, 12, 14, 16 and 17 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to expedite prosecution and place this application in condition for allowance.


Finally, non-elected claims 33-35 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to file a divisional application directed to the subject matter of these non-elected claims.

The above amendments do not raise any new issues requiring further consideration and/or search and are believed to place this application in condition for allowance. Consequently, entry of the amendments is believed to be appropriate and is respectfully requested.

The pending claims are believed to be allowable and favorable office action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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